



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- 3 2007 Retiree Luncheon Photos
- 4 Portland District Water Safety
- 6 District Stewards Go Global
- 8 Multi-generational Communication



*Former Resource Management Chief Gil Fletcher was inducted into the Portland District's Gallery of Distinguished Civilian Employees at the annual retiree lunch May 29, 2007. Fletcher, seen here with his wife Arlene, center, and daughter Susan, retired in 2003. "I found over the years that my humor, although at times a little weird, often helped get a point across," he said. "I always tried to take my job seriously, but not take myself seriously."*



## COMMANDER'S COLUMN

June is an important time for the Army. Between Memorial Day, when we honor those who made the ultimate sacrifice, and Independence Day, is Flag Day. In addition, celebrated on June 14 this year is the 232nd Army birthday. Formed in 1775, the year before the Declaration of Independence, the Continental Army helped a fledgling nation gain its freedom from Great Britain. The first chief engineer was part of that original Army and the Corps of Engineers as a unit was formed the following year. Happy Birthday, Army!

As the Corps mission expanded over the years, we now are responsible environmental stewards. In this role, we must properly operate and maintain the District's infrastructure. If we maintain our equipment right, it normally doesn't break but this is an increasing challenge as much of our equipment reaches its designed life expectancy. So we rely on programs like FEMS that help maintain our infrastructure.


The Facilities Equipment Maintenance System is a computerized maintenance management tool that tracks and assigns tasks for every maintenance job, small or large. It helps us track the time, parts and labor needed to perform preventive maintenance. When used in conjunction with other tools like P2 and CEFMS, FEMS can ensure every hour on each work order is applied to the correct project. Now we can more accurately plan our maintenance needs, not just put out brushfires.

On another environmental issue: we all know it's been a very dry spring. As of April 1, our reservoir levels were all on target for refilling. However, April was drier than usual and May provided only 52 percent of our normal rainfall. Many people think if there's a good snow pack over the winter then reservoir levels will be fine for summer recreation. They don't realize that spring rains keep water levels up more than melting snow. More recently,



*Col. Thomas O'Donovan*

and the National Marine Fisheries Service. They requested the Corps to release certain amounts of stored water from April 1 to June 30 to help listed fish migrate through the Willamette River basin.

Our commitment to protect listed fish species in this way means upwards of 30 percent of the Corps' water storage is used to augment river flows in the spring. Keeping future generations of fish viable by making sure juveniles can move out to the ocean and adults can reach spawning grounds sometimes means lake levels decrease more quickly than we'd like. That's the hard part of balancing our environmental and recreation missions. I hope you will tell people who are wondering what the Corps is doing with all that water exactly how we're using it. Remember, to many people, you are the Corps.  **Essays!**

### CORPS'PONDENT



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of Engineers  
Portland District

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# 2007 Retiree Luncheon and Distinguished Civilian of the Year Award Ceremony



## RETIREE LUNCHEON



*"Thanks to all who helped arrange and put on the Retirees' Luncheon. Thanks to Col. O'Donovan, Diana Fredlund and a special thanks to Jaki Schmunk for her kind words.*

*It was great to see so many old friends, especially Larry Fleskes, former District Comptroller and also in the gallery. Larry hired me back in 1966.*

*As you pass my photo on the way into the Executive Office, remember that my selection proves everyone has a chance. Also, think of the RM employees that provide the District with sound financial management every day. The next time you see an RM employee, tell them thanks for their fine efforts."*

***Gil Fletcher***



*Corps of Engineers Photos*



# Water Safety a critical part of Portland District's recreation mission

By Jennifer Sowell

The Portland District carries out a variety of missions involving water: navigation, flood damage reduction, hydropower production and wetlands regulation. It is the Corps' recreation mission, however, that provides a unique and important opportunity for outreach to the public about water safety.

The District's recreation areas attracted more than 9.8 million visitors in fiscal year 2006. With most of these areas located near water, promoting water safety as part of the Corps' recreation mission is vital. Increased fatalities and injuries illustrated the need to teach the public safe and responsible ways to enjoy water-based recreation.

Dangers related to water-based recreation are present all year. Everything from a lack of swimming skills, to the risk of hypothermia, to wearing a properly fitted lifejacket are topics for public outreach. Safe boating is also a large part of water safety. Alcohol consumption is involved in more than half of all boating accidents; less visible threats to safety, such as carbon monoxide poisoning, exist as well. Since boaters and users of other motorized recreational craft must share the water with fishermen and swimmers, knowing and obeying the rules of the road, so to speak, can go a long way toward a safe recreation experience for everyone.

"Drowning is a leading cause of accidental death in the nation - nearly all drownings occur within 10 feet of safety and non-swimmers often drown because of poor judgment," said Patti Williams, Operations Division.

Portland District's waterways are shared by a variety of users. Of growing concern are those who seek out new and more thrilling activities. Last summer, Portland District banned kite tubing after it proved to be a dangerous new form of recreation. Many states cited injuries and deaths from the activity, including a serious injury sustained to a visitor at Detroit Lake.

Col. Thomas O'Donovan imposed the ban because of the high potential for serious injuries caused by the uncontrollable flight of kite tubes.

"Our greatest responsibility is to do everything we can to prevent injuries and fatalities on our reservoirs," said O'Donovan. "We want our visitors to have fun, but more importantly we want them to be safe."

The Corps uses a variety of methods to educate the public about water safety. District staff place water safety posters and information at all public use areas, host on-site water safety programs, conduct outreach programs at schools, civic organizations and annual events. They also work with marine deputies to conduct vessel checks.

Park rangers have the best opportunity for the all-important, face-to-face communication with visitors to Corps recreation areas.



*Park ranger John Derinzy encourages students to direct their questions to Seamoor the water safety sea serpent. The remote-controlled mascot helps park rangers deliver water safety tips at events throughout the year.*



“Water safety is so important that we always interject it into our outreach with the public, even if it’s not the main purpose of the discussion or event,” said Skip Fowler, a park ranger at Bonneville Dam.

Some of the hands-on activities used to promote water safety are fairly inventive. Fatal Vision Goggles allow people to get a feel for how difficult it is to efficiently and safely operate a boat at increasing levels of intoxication, showing first-hand why doing so is a bad idea.

The District is always seeking new and unique ways to incorporate water safety messages and increase daily, face-to-face communication with the public about the importance of water safety.

The Corps is the nation’s leading provider of water-based recreation and the second leading provider of recreation on all federally-managed public lands. Increased visibility, accessibility and popularity of recreation have made water safety outreach critical to Corps’ recreation mission.

Safety outreach took on an even more important role last year when the Chief of Engineers launched the Public Fatality Reduction Initiative. The initiative calls for a reduction in all public fatalities on Corps projects, including water-based deaths.

According to former Chief of Engineers Carl Strock, accomplishing this challenging objective will require a concerted effort to strengthen command and leadership involvement, use of resources, and support for visitor safety education and outreach.

Statistics show that the Corps’ efforts have significantly increased water safety awareness and reduced fatalities on Corps reservoirs. Even with the program’s success, the goals to further reduce fatalities and more heavily promote water safety remain at the forefront of the recreation mission.

“About 90 percent of drowning victims at Corps projects were not wearing their life jackets,” said Eugene Goff, lead park ranger at The Dalles, John Day, Willow Creek Project. “I like to put it this way -- **wear your life jacket, wear your life jacket, wear your life jacket!**”

Goff also stresses the importance of knowing the basics: learn to swim, know your limits and never swim alone. 🏠



Corps of Engineers Photos

*Children try to assemble a nut and bolt in cold water, an exercise demonstrating the effects of hypothermia. Corps park ranger Claudia Round explains the experiment, pointing out how much harder putting on a life jacket would be after falling into cold water.*



#### **Innovative techniques for getting the Corps’ water safety messages to the public:**

- ◆ **Painting water safety stencils on boat ramps.**
- ◆ **Life jacket loaner boards at swim beaches.**
- ◆ **Placing billboards and advertising on buses throughout the area.**
- ◆ **Putting water safety messages on hundreds of thousands of ice bags.**
- ◆ **Supplying local movie theaters with water safety slides to include in film previews.**
- ◆ **Using mascots Buddy Beaver and Seamoar the water safety sea serpent.**
- ◆ **Printing bilingual promotional items.**
- ◆ **Partnering with groups, such as the Coast Guard Auxiliary, water safety councils and state and local agencies.**



# District Stewards

## Environmental Partnership Takes Willamette Experience to China's 2<sup>nd</sup> Yangtze Forum

By Amy Echols, Public Affairs Office

THE CORPS PARTNERSHIPS

It could have been the Columbia River, but it wasn't. It might have been the Rogue River, but it wasn't there, either. It was one of the mightiest rivers in the world, home to one of the largest dams ever constructed. How did two U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Portland District representatives end up on a Yangtze River boat trip in China talking about a successful Willamette River Basin environmental project?

"Our long-standing partnership with The Nature Conservancy took us to China to share our restoration work on the Willamette River and the Green River in Kentucky," explained Col. Tom O'Donovan, Portland District Commander. "The Nature Conservancy and other environmental organizations from around the globe want to help the Chinese government build new water management programs. The Chinese are now committed to addressing environmental issues earlier."

Traveling to China to promote environmental stewardship took the Corps' longstanding collaboration with The Nature Conservancy to another level. "We achieved one of the most important goals of the trip: deepening our partnership with The Nature Conservancy," O'Donovan said.

For three days in April, delegates from more than 20 countries met in Changsha, China, to discuss environmental problems affecting the Yangtze River at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Yangtze Forum. Delegations included government officials, private sector experts and representatives from non-governmental organizations; The Nature Conservancy and the World Wildlife Fund, both NGOs, participated as forum co-sponsors. Discussions included conservation and sustainable development of the Yangtze River and Dongting

Lake, China's second largest lake and an important part of the river's flood basin.

Sharing information and recommendations with China is nothing new for the Corps, said Matt Rea, Planning, Programs and Project Management Office, who accompanied O'Donovan as the second District representative. "Many years ago the Corps recommended that China develop less massive structures than the humongous Three Gorges Dam," he said. "The Chinese now realize the impacts of their decision."

With 12 more dams planned upstream of the Three Gorges Dam, The Nature Conservancy is advising the Chinese government on how to modify the planned projects to encourage environmental stewardship. The government's goal now is to maintain the health of China's rivers and fish, while improving their flood warning system and operating dams to maximize the use of floodplains.

"China wants global recognition for their engineering, but it recognizes this judgment is in part based on their environmental record and responsiveness," said Brian Richter, director of The Nature Conservancy's Global Freshwater Initiative and a member of the delegation to China.

At the forum, O'Donovan and Rea presented "Restoring Environmental Flows in American Rivers," based on the Corps' and The Nature Conservancy's Sustainable Rivers Projects. The information focused on efforts to achieve the best balance between operation of the Willamette and Green rivers projects and environmental restoration. According to Rea, the presentation was a success, except for a couple technical glitches. "All went well, but translating our slides beforehand and including some Chinese characters would have improved the simultaneous translation," he added.



# Go Global



## THE CORPS PARTNERSHIPS

Corps of Engineers Photos



Center photo: Scale model of the Three Gorges Dam on the Yangtze River  
Left photo: Col O'Donovan visiting the dam  
Right photo: Matt Rea and Col O'Donovan at the Forum in Changsha, China

A United States Army officer in his formal uniform was a constant attraction for the Chinese; local and regional news media repeatedly sought out O'Donovan for interviews and photos. O'Donovan and Rea were asked about their views of the forum, of China, the use of American rivers and the Corps' process for addressing environmental issues.

O'Donovan considered the forum a success on many levels and found the discussions wide-ranging. That the Chinese government actively invited other countries to the forum was very important, he said.

"The discussions were remarkably frank for a Communist, one-party government and included concerns from the international environmental community about the almost-completed Three Gorges Dam. If the Chinese government can implement the ideas presented in the forum's Changsha Declaration with the enthusiasm we experienced during the forum, this could be the start of a truly significant effort to resolve the challenges."

Following the forum, some attendees traveled down the Yangtze River and included a tour of the reservoir and river tributaries above the Three Gorges Dam. The dam, which spans the Yangtze River, is

one of the largest ever built and dwarfs anything in the United States. Its hydropower capability produces three times the hydropower of all the hydro projects in the Portland District, but plans didn't include any fish passage or temperature control. "[Because of that,] the dam is creating unanticipated or ignored impacts," said O'Donovan. "The river as an ecosystem is in very serious trouble and this tour confirmed the need for many things we heard during the forum."

"It was surreal, traveling along a 400-mile reservoir, through an incredibly scenic canyon. The size of the Three Gorges Dam was unimaginable, especially through the hazy air," said Rea, noting the serious air pollution problems that China faces.

"I've was very happy to return to clean, green, much less populated Portland. This trip reaffirmed that we share common values; we share the air and the world's water resources, so we have to work together to achieve the common goal of a healthy environment," Rea concluded. "I returned with renewed excitement about the really good things we do here."

See the March and April Corps' pondent issues for more stories on the Corps and The Nature Conservancy partnership.



# Multi-generational communication Baby Boomers and GEN XER'S take charge...for now

By Erica Gann, Executive Office

How does our age affect how we communicate? We know that today's youth are much more comfortable with electronic gadgets than their grandparents, or even their parents. Do we communicate differently than our parents? Experts say the answer is yes.

Today's workforce is made up of four basic age groups, the Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y (or Nexters). Each group has its own preferences and comfort levels, although these definitions are only generalizations, and not everyone fits into their chronological category. Last month we looked at the two smallest groups in the Portland District workforce: Traditionalists and Nexters. It's time to look at who makes up the majority of your co-workers: Baby Boomers and Gen Xers.

Out of nearly 1100 Portland District employees, 600 of them were born between 1944 and 1960. They are the Baby Boomers. Almost every office, work group and team includes two or more Boomers; with a few exceptions, most of the District's senior management staff are Boomers. That's because Baby Boomers make up about 54 percent of District employees, a statistic that closely matches a Duke University study that reports Baby Boomers comprise more than 53 percent of the U.S. labor force.

Baby Boomers are the children of the World War II generation. After the war, the American economy was booming, and these children grew up in a time of security, prosperity, change and expansion. Not every one fits this model, but your average Boomer values hard work, success and teamwork. They don't want rules and regulations, but if there are rules, they want them explained and to be able to question them. They don't want to be controlled; they want flexibility and options. They prefer direct, open communication.

## NWP Generational Workforce

Traditionalist (1943 & Earlier):	27
Baby Boomer (1944-1960):	600
Generation X (1961-1976):	336
Nexter (1977 & Younger)	132

Les Miller, Emergency Management Branch, has been with Corps for nearly 30 years, starting in 1980 as a young engineering technician in the Walla Walla District. Miller worked for several departments, including water quality, regulatory and emergency management, before landing his current position as the Portland District's Emergency Management Branch Chief in 1988. He attributes his success with the Corps to hard work and personal determination. "Knowing that what I do will help people during disasters and will make a difference in their lives is very satisfying," Miller said.

Miller holds many of his generation's values, preferring to work in teams and favoring face-to-face communications, but readily admits that technology in the workplace is often more effective. "Realistically, email makes more sense, because face-to-face efforts aren't always practical, with all the coordination that's needed on multiple projects among many different staff and teams."

True to his Boomer roots, Miller isn't all about work. Just ask him about his family or his involvement with the Boy Scouts and watch his face light up. "I chose to move to Portland to be close to my parents and grandparents. Throughout the years, I've been heavily involved with the Boy Scouts leading and organizing groups and camps. I've also been a volunteer firefighter," Miller said. "My career is important to me, but it also serves as an outlet for the values I really care about in my personal life."



Miller's assessment confirms a characteristic found in many of today's Baby Boomers – that at this point in their lives, while their careers are important to them, they are choosing instead to focus more on their quality of life away from the workplace.

The other group in the majority, Generation X, makes up the next largest population in the District, with 336 employees.

Gen Xers were born in the 1960s and 1970s, the beginning of the two-income family era. During this time, the stability and security of the Baby Boomer years vanished and was replaced with anxiety about financial security, health and safety issues, as well as job stability. With both parents employed, Gen Xers were the first to be labeled "latch-key kids."

Watching their parents struggle with double-digit inflation and unemployment formed an entrepreneurial spirit in the hearts of Gen-Xers. Independence and creativity define this group; they would rather invest in their own future, rather than rely on large institutional organizations for financial security.

Mike Magee, Engineering and Construction Division, has worked for the Portland District for more than eight years, starting as an engineering technician. Before that he spent eight years in the Navy. Today, he's a technical lead in EC's Mechanical Design section.

Magee's strategy for managing his Corps career

has been to seize new growth opportunities whenever they open up. "So far I've been lucky with promotions in the Portland District.

Magee is a recent graduate of the District's Leadership Development Program and knows that that experience, along with his professional engineering certifications, will move him forward career-wise with the Corps. "It's my responsibility to invest in my own professional development, just like managing my 401K," Magee said. "My professional success is all up to me."

Magee, like many of his Gen-X peers, balances work with play. As an avid golfer, he's even brought golf into the workplace, organizing tournaments for Corps employees "When I first started with the Corps, there were many folks very involved with organizing employee events. They had golf leagues with waiting lists!" he said. "All that went away, though, when those folks [the Traditionalists] retired and no one wanted to take over."

Magee thinks people still want to be involved in employee activities, but in smaller groups. "Lots of people get together in EC, but the size of the group is smaller and more informal."

So, what does all this mean? Why should employees care about

## A snapshot of District diversity



**Traditionalist, Carol Job**  
Engineering and Construction Division



**Baby Boomer, Les Miller**  
Emergency Management Branch



**Gen Xer, Mike Magee**  
Engineering and Construction Division



**Nexter, Carolyn Shivers**  
Logistics Management

Corps of Engineers Photos



## WORKFORCE COMMUNICATION



# Multi-generational communication

## continued...



### WORKFORCE COMMUNICATION

who's a Traditionalist, who's a Nexter, or a Gen-Xer, or a Baby Boomer? Having this information and a general understanding of each group will help us all be better communicators. We can structure our communications to meet our listener's needs and values. If we know the strengths and communication styles of each group, we are more likely to work successfully as a team.

We can also structure our communications to meet the needs of incoming generations. Baby Boomers and Gen-Xers may dominate the Portland District landscape now, but in a few

short years it will be the Gen Xers and Nexters who will be in the majority. These two groups have vastly different communication styles than those of our current workforce majority.

Cherish your face-to-face conversations, relish all those long meetings and save all your hardcopy District publications, because the next thing you know, you'll be conducting all your communications via text message and bulletin boards. Many Traditionalists and Boomers may have just shuddered at that thought, but the Gen Xers and Nexters are ready to take up the standard and run with it.

#### SUPPORTIVE BEHAVIORS AND TIPS FOR COMMUNICATING

##### Traditionalist

- ◆ By nature Traditionalists are private, the "silent generation". Don't expect members of this generation to share their thoughts immediately.
- ◆ For the Traditionalist, one's word is his/her bond, so it's important to focus on words rather than body language or inferences.
- ◆ Face to face or written communication is preferred.
- ◆ Don't waste their time, or let them feel as though their time is being wasted.

##### Baby Boomer

- ◆ Boomers are the "show me" generation, so your body language is important when communicating.
- ◆ Speak in an open, direct style but avoid controlling language.
- ◆ Answer questions thoroughly and expect to be pressed for the details.
- ◆ Present options to demonstrate flexibility in your thinking.

##### Generation X

- ◆ Use email as a primary communication tool.
- ◆ Talk in short sound bites to keep their attention.
- ◆ Ask them for their feedback and provide them with regular feedback.
- ◆ Share information with them on a regular basis and strive to keep them in the loop.
- ◆ Use an informal communication style.

##### Nexter

- ◆ Use action words and challenge them at every opportunity.
- ◆ They will resent it if you talk down to them.
- ◆ They prefer email communication.
- ◆ Seek their feedback constantly and provide them with regular feedback.
- ◆ Use humor and create a fun learning environment. Don't take yourself too seriously.
- ◆ Encourage them to take risks and break the rules so that they can explore new ways of learning.

Resource: <http://honolulu.hawaii.edu/intranet/committees/FacDevCom/guidebk/teachtip/intergencomm.htm>




# Newlyweds, a bench, a great-granddaughter and a coincidence

by Pat Barry, Bonneville Lock and Dam

Wayne and Nadene Goff were newlyweds when Wayne worked at Bonneville Lock and Dam back in the 1930s. He worked as an engineer for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers during the dam's construction. Eventually he moved on to the Light House Service and the U.S. Coast Guard. After a long life together, Wayne passed away in 2001, followed by Nadene in 2006.

Their son, Professor Robert Goff, thought it would be fitting to place a park bench in their memory at Bonneville. I was asked to work with Goff to make this happen. He contacted a bench manufacturer and arranged for a bench with a plaque to be delivered to Bonneville. The only question that remained was, "Where was the best place to put it?" Goff decided to come to Oregon from his home in California to help pick a location.

Before his arrival, one of the hundreds of school groups that we see every year stopped in for a tour. One of the 5th graders, a student named Eleanor Ewing, asked me, "Have you ever heard of my great-grandfather, Wayne Goff?" Surprised, I told her about the bench. Eleanor did not know the bench had been ordered by her great uncle; Goff did not know his great-niece would be visiting the dam! She sat on the bench and her teacher took her photo, which I emailed Goff. He was surprised to hear about the coincidence!

The following week, Goff visited Bonneville and found the perfect location for the bench, near the Bonneville Rose Garden, overlooking the spillway. Perhaps the next time Eleanor returns she can sit there while she looks at what her great-grandfather helped build. 



*Professor Robert Goff (no relation to Eugene Goff at The Dalles) sits on the bench he donated in honor of his parents. Wayne and Nadene Goff were newlyweds during Bonneville Lock and Dam's construction in the 1930's.*

*Corps of Engineers Photo*





# BRING YOUR CHILD TO WORK DAY



## FROM THE FIELD



Corps of Engineers Photo

On April 26, 12 children of Bonneville Lock and Dam employees came to see what their parents do all day. The children visited the Fish Hatchery, fed the fish, then took a tour of the Bradford Island Visitor Center and Powerhouse 1 with Park Ranger Jane Jackson. They had lunch of pizza and cookies then went out to view the sea lion activities at Powerhouse 2.



## In Memoriam

**M**elvin G. Block died June 2, 2007. He was 92. Block joined the Army in 1942 and fought in the Western Pacific during WWII. Following his military service he worked for the Army Corps of Engineers doing survey work on various construction projects in the Northwest. He retired in 1972 after 31 years and made his home back in Woodburn. Block is survived by his wife of 67 years, Loretta, his son, granddaughters, great-grandchildren and many nieces and nephews who regarded him as their favorite uncle.